

The Portage Presbyterian



A Newsletter for The Portage Presbyterian Family

December 2018

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER

This will be the 20th year the Portage Presbyterian Church has opened its doors on Christmas day for a free mid-day dinner for people in the community. Last year's event provided a meal for about 150+ people and it is anticipated that at least that many will be served this year. The Christmas dinner was initiated to provide a gathering place and festive meal for people who would otherwise be alone or could not provide a holiday meal for their family. Generous donations from the congregation and the community have supported the event. One of the factors contributing to its success is that many individuals and families, including many from outside our congregation, help. The meal served is turkey and ham, mashed potatoes, vegetable, cranberry and rolls along with dessert and beverage. Meals can be delivered to shut-ins by calling the church office ahead of time. Dinner will be served from noon to 1:30 P.M.

We are in need of help that day. Please contact Nancy Schaper at 742-7242 if you are willing to volunteer a few hours of your time or sign up on the sheets in Parry Hall. There is also a signup sheet for donations of Christmas cookies for our dessert.



RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS - DEC 9

On Sunday, December 9 we will be receiving "new members" into the PPC community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of this church community, or would like more information about the church or membership, please contact Pastor Dave.



We will have our traditional "candlelight service" including the singing of Christmas hymns, the "cloth for the cradle" and lighting of our candles @ 5:30 p.m.

Come and share in this wonderful opportunity for worship and fellowship as we celebrate the birth of the Christ into our world and lives.

And be sure to invite your neighbors and friends to come and share with us too!!!

"HOLIDAY HOUSE" - DECEMBER 1st

The Presbyterian Women's annual "Holiday House" will be held on Saturday, December 1 from 10:30-1:00 p.m.

A great selection of baked goods such as holiday cookies, bars, pies and snacks will be available for purchase for the holidays. Craft items will be found as well.

A luncheon will be provided for \$6.00 which will include chicken noodle soup and beef barley soup along with fresh vegetables, rolls and desserts. Please come and enjoy the food, fun, fellowship and sounds of Christmas carols.

If you are making some yummy baked goods you may bring them to the church on Friday, November 30 from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Otherwise you may bring them the day of the "Holiday House" beginning at 8:00 a.m. We like them as early in the morning as possible.

If you have any questions or would like to help in any way, please contact *Elaine Crammond*, *Kathy Hankins or Donna Mohr*.

1

UPCOMING WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Third Sunday of Advent

10:05 a.m. – Worship in Sanctuary

Youth Christmas Program

"How The Grinch Found The Christ In Christmas"

Wednesday, December 19 6:05 p.m. - "Wed Nite" Worship in Sanctuary

Sunday, December 23, 2018
The Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:05 a.m. –Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

5:30 p.m. - "Christmas Worship In A Barn"
Hosted by the Heinze Family
W10070 Hwy 127

Monday, December 24, 2018

Christmas Eve Worship

5:30 p.m. - Candlelight Service in Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 25, 2018

Christmas Day Worship

11:00 a.m. - Christmas Worship of Hymns and

Scripture

Wednesday, December 26, 2018

No "Wed Nite Worship" tonight!

Sunday, December 30, 2018
10:05 a.m. - Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

Monday, December 31, 2018

5:30 p.m. - New Year's Eve Worship Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Sunday, December 2, 2018

The First Sunday of Advent

10:05 a.m. — Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

"Greening of the Church Sunday"

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

6:05 p.m. - "Wed Nite" Worship in Sanctuary

Sunday, December 9, 2018
The Second Sunday of Advent
10:05 a.m. – Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

THE PORTAGE PRESBYTERIAN

Is published monthly by the
Portage Presbyterian Church
120 West Pleasant Street, P.O. Box 222
Portage, WI 53901
Phone & Fax Line: - 608-742-6006
Portage Presbyterian Church E-mail Addresses
Pastor — pastordaye@portagepresbyterian.com
Church Office — office@portagepresbyterian.com
Portage Presbyterian Church Website Address
www.portagepresbyterianchurch.com
Editor — Kathryn Curtis
Pastor — The Rev. David J. Hankins

Uece Boer

	1	
BTR - Bell Tower	SUNDAY	A CASA
	MONDAY	京女女女
	TUESDAY	大型
	WEDNESDAY	2018
	THURSDAY	新女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女女
19 1	FRIDAY	发生
	SATURDAY	

مان	1:00pm	Friday $-8:00$ am $-1:00$ pm	t,	Free Christmas		Christmas Day 10:05cm Traditional
	am – 1:00pm Closed	Wednesday – 8:00am – 1:00pm Thursday – Office Closed		12:00-1:30pm	31 5:30pm New Year's Eve Service, SA	30 I st Sunday after
• >	Closed	Tuesday - Office Closed		11:00 a.m. Christmas		5:30pm Barn Service at
k •	Iours — 1:00pm	Church Office Hours Monday - 8:00am - 1:00pm		Christmas	5:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, SA	10:05am Bible Study, BIR Worship, SA
29	28	27	26	25 Merry	24	234th Sunday Of Advent
22	21	20	5:00pm Meal, FH 5:30pm PEACE, BTR 6:05pm Worship, SA 6:30pm Chancel Choir, Rehearsal, FH	6:00pm Bell Choir, PH 11:00am "Late For Breakfast" at Dino's	17 10:00am Worship Service at Tivoli 5:00-6:30pm Sharing Supper at Bartels Middle School	163 rd Sunday of Advent Youth Christmas Pageant 10:05am Informal Worship, SA 4:00pm 4-H Meeting, FH
12;30pm Youth Christmas Rehearsal 2:00pm Christmas Caroling	January Newsletter Articles Due in Office	6:00pm Session Meeting, WC	5:30pm PEACE, BTR 6:05pm Worship, SA 6:30pm Chancel Choir, Rehearsal, FH	10:00am Region 5 Prayer Group, WC 5:00pm Memorial Mission Stewardship, WC	4:00pm ACA,WC	10:05am Traditional Worship, SA Congregational Meeting
15	14	13	12	jumb jumb	10	9 2 nd Sunday of Advent
8 I: I Spm Holiday Train arriving at train station	7 9:00am -4:00pm Creative Arts Festival, Church and Westminster Center		5 5:00pm Meal, FH 5:30pm PEACE, BTR 6:05pm Worship, SA 6:30pm Chancel Choir, Rehearsal, FH 6:30pmWorship Jam, SA	4 9:00am Bell Choir, PH 5:00pm Events Committee, WC	3 2 2 3	2 1st Sunday of Advent 8:00am Breakfast and Decorating the Church 8:45am Bible Study, BTR 10:05am Traditional Worship, SA
10:30am 1:00pm Holiday House, FH			d party of 2019	CARD PARTY Mark you calendars for our first card party of 2019 that will be on Friday, January 25.	CARD PARTY Mark you calen that will be on F	BTR - Bell Tower Room FH - Fellowship Hall PH - Parry Hall SA - Sanctuary WC - Westminster Center

MINISTRY AND WORSHIP @ TIVOLI

PPC is blessed to provide a monthly worship service at Tivoli.

We have found that our worship service is one of the better attended worship times – and that is great news!

We are looking for additional people to come and help get people to and from the chapel.

You will have the opportunity to share in a special worship experience as well as being able to interact with some very nice people. Chaplain Monica remarks how much the residents enjoy having people come and share worship with them.

If you could help with this ministry once in a while, contact Pastor Dave.

NOTE! We share worship on the Monday December 17th ... @10:00 a.m.



ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN DECEMBER

The Adult Bible Class will be meeting on Sunday mornings, *December 2nd and December 9th*.

At those times, we will continue our study of "The Apostles' Creed."

On December 2nd, we will be studying, "he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead."

Then on December 9th, we will be studying, "he ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

Come and join us as we continue this interesting study in December.

We meet at 8:45 a.m. in the Bell Tower Room. All are welcome.

This class is led by the Rev. Dr. Carol Hermann here @ PPC.

"HOLIDAY HOUSE" @ PPC - DEC 1st

Merry Christmas

"SHARING SUPPER" – DECEMBER 17, 2018

The "Sharing Supper" will be shared <u>on</u> Monday, December 17!!!

Serving begins at 5:00 p.m. at the Bartels Middle School cafeteria.

"Sharing Supper" is a meal, sponsored by community groups and organizations. It is intended to bring people in the community together, around tables, where we get to know one another and have an opportunity to learn more about what is happening in the community around us.

A unique part of this experience is the "Kid's Corner" designed especially for the younger folks. Here young people will have a chance to hear stories and do craft projects related to what is happening around us.

All are welcome! Bring your friends and neighbors.

Come and share in this unique and wonderful experience — on <u>December 17</u> @ 5:00 p.m.



Pastor's Page



It is interesting now many of the Christmas hymns make reference to the birth of the Christ child being a time of "peace." Consider ...

- > "Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright."
- > "O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie; above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by"
- > "What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?"
- > "Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head; the stars in the sky looked down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay"

Don't get me wrong - there is something comforting and familiar and good about "peace." Yet, if we really stop to consider what was unfolding with the "birth of Jesus," "peace and quiet" may not have been quite as prevalent as we might think.

If I have experienced nothing else from the experiential "Christmas Worship in the Barn" at the Heinze farm ... it is that a "barn is not quiet." There is always movement and noise!

Then having a newborn baby around does not bring to mind rest and relaxation. Rather it suggests a life which is busy, active, noisy and chaotic.

And then there is the "incarnational element" of the Jesus' birth.

God did not bring the Messiah into the world to maintain the status quo. God came to bring life and hope and peace. And the only way to make these a reality would be "to shake things up." Matthew's Gospel, in the 2nd chapter, notes the unsettling nature of God's presence in the world - "In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? ... When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;"

Imagine it - the God who initiates the "chaos" and "disruption" is also the same God who makes "peace" and "hope" possible for God's people.

How can this be?

God initiates the "chaos" in order that God's people might be able to break free from those things which desire to keep us from seeing and experiencing the grace and hope and new life that God offers to us and to all the world. The prophet Isaiah, in reference to the Messiah whom God would sent into the world, writes of "the people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light." God is at work to set God's people free from that which would inhibit or obscure or try to make irrelevant God's real message and purpose for us and for the world.

In the midst of this "chaos" God's presence and actions provides true "peace" because we can know and we trust that the God who sent the Son into the world - is right here with us in the mud and muck and messiness of our world and our lives.

That is one of the true messages of Christmas - God comes to shake things up. And God is right here with us!

So - Happy Advent and Merry Christmas - God upsets everything! And nothing will ever be the same again!

205205

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - DEC 9

The Session is calling for a "Congregational Meeting" on Sunday, December 9 immediately following our morning worship service.

The purpose of this meeting is the election of Elders and Deacons for new 3 year terms.

Those being nominated for Elder include: John Crammond (1st 3 year term); Kathy Raimer (1st 3 year term) and Alex Harvey (1st 3 year term).

Those nominated as **Deacons** include: *Liz Bellmore* (2nd 3 year term); *Joyce Oehlhof* (2nd 3 year term); and *Tammy Foster* (1st 3 year term).

Additional nominations can be made from the floor, provided the person being nominated has been contacted and has agreed to serve.



"PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNIUM"

The Presbyterian Youth Triennium is a Presbyterian Church-wide youth gathering which will happen on July 16-20, 2019 at the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, IN.

This is an event for high school age youth in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The theme for the 2019 event is "Here's My Heart".

This theme gets right to the heart of the matter. Drawing from the words of the hymn, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, "Here's My Heart" expresses our deepest desire to be part of something bigger and more beautiful than the tiny flicker of our own candles. It speaks of passion and identity. It speaks of purpose and action.

Interestingly enough it started with shenanigans! The story behind this beloved song by Robert Robinson begins with a group of teenagers showing up at an evangelistic meeting with the sole purpose of heckling the preacher. But a greater purpose and force was at work, and God's calling haunted Robert until he was able to one day proclaim, "Here's my heart."

We invite young people and their adult leaders to come experience God's love in a way so powerful and compelling that they, too, are moved to say, "Here's my heart". And together we will learn what it means to serve Christ with our intelligence, energy, imagination and love.

Costs for the PYT is equally divided between the John Knox Presbytery, the home church and the individual. It is estimated that the cost for each would be approximately \$220.00.

Those who may be interested in participating should have their registrations into the John Knox Presbytery office as soon as possible in order to reserve a space.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Pastor Dave as soon as possible.



STEWARDSHIP DRIVE

If you have not returned your "HOW" card you may put it in the collection plate on Sunday or mail it to the church office. There are extra forms on the table in Parry Hall. Thank You.

"CHRISTMAS IN A BARN" - DEC 23rd

Some things stay the same – other things change!

So it is with our "Christmas worship in a barn" service.

Yes, we will be holding our annual "barn service" again this year on *Sunday evening*, *December 23 @ 5:30 p.m.* This worship time provides members, friends and folks from the community an opportunity to get beyond the "Christmas blitz" to rediscover a more simple, and yet powerful, Christmas worship experience.

And to share this in a "real barn" with farm animals!

The location of the "barn service" is the Heinze Farm - W10079 Hwy 127.

For those unfamiliar with Hwy 127, you go on Hwy 16 toward the Dells and turn on Hwy 127 just past the I-39 interchange, going past the Columbia Correctional/the Prison.

Come and share a real unique and inspirational Christmas experience.

And be sure to dress warm! See you there!



"SHARING" THE GOOD NEWS @ PPC

The Advent and Christmas seasons are occasions when people are most open to invitations to come and experience the fellowship and ministries of church communities.

The Discipleship Committee is making available "Advent/Christmas Invitations" for you to take and share with family, friends, neighbors, strangers - ANYONE & EVERYONE!

These "invitations" include the "schedule of activities" for PPC as well as a space for you to include a "personal note" if you choose.

Here's an idea - what if everyone took one of these and "invited" someone to come and share in this special time of the year here at PPC? What might happen? Who might come and be with us?

Something as simple and easy as "an invitation" could make all the difference!

Please take as many as you want to "share the Good News."

CHRISTMAS MORNING WORSHIP @ 11:00

We gather for a Christmas morning worship celebration of God's Messiah who breaks into our world and our lives.

At 11:00 a.m. we will have a worship service of singing, Scripture and prayer for anyone who would like to share.

This worship time immediately proceeds the "Free Christmas Day Dinner" which will be served beginning at Noon.

Come and worship the newborn King!



"CAROLING PARTY" - DEC 15

A "Caroling Party" is being organized for Saturday afternoon, December 15.

We will meet at PPC at 2:00 p.m. and then proceed to "make a joyful noise."

Come and be a part of this wonderful Christmas experience as we "share the Good News of great joy for all the world."

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

The receipts from the offering are distributed equally to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs and to Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women of the General Assembly Mission Council to support Presbyterian racial ethnic education.

The Christmas Joy Offering will be received on December 16 & 23 during worship service. If you have boxed church envelopes, there is a Christmas Joy envelope included.

4

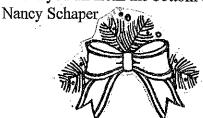
HARVEST DINNER THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who made our Harvest Dinner a great success. Thank you for the donations of 47 pies. Thank you to Edith McElroy for the donation of bread for the dressing, Fred & Judy Taylor for making the dressing and Link's Greenhouse for donating the squash and goards. Thanks to Tara Bandekow who provided a Silent Auction with awesome baskets to bid on and generated \$1,271.00 towards our profit.

Thank you to all the people who helped in the dining room, kitchen, pie room, ticket sellers and takers, publicity people, turkey bakers and carvers, dishwashers and cleanup crew and those of you who came and ate the delicious meal. We served 218 meals and made up 53 carry out meals. We made a profit (which includes the silent auction) of over \$4,000.00 that was donated for the general operating expenses of our church. This would not have been a success without the help of everyone. We are so lucky at PPC to have so many willing people to give of their time. If you were unable to make it, you missed a wonderful meal and fellowship time. So you don't miss it next year mark your calendars for November 9, 2019.

An extra special thank you to the members of the Events Committee, (Donna, Edith, Nancy M., Kathy R., Allison, Kevin and Peggy) who put in many extra hours to make this all come together. Thanks to Nick Hankins, Joelle Syftestad, Edith McElroy, Liz Bellmore, Tara Bandekow, Glenda Day, Kathy Raimer, Kathy Hankins, Rosemary Minnema and Rhys & Laura Brenner who came and helped us cook up 127 acorn squash.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.



"READERS & MUSIC" FOR CHRISTMAS?

If you are interested in being a "reader" for Christmas Eve or in providing "special music" during the worship service on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, please check out the sign-up sheets in Parry Hall and let us know.

Questions? Talk to Pastor Dave



SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

Once again we answered the call to ring bells for the Salvation Army. We rang early in the season again, December 17. Thank you to Jill Porzel, Joyce Meredith, Gabe Bandekow, Thomas, TeRina Martinson, Alicia, Bri & Braylon Jurgeson, Pastor Dave & Sarah, Lee Roundy & Wednesday school children, Evelyn Brown, Marci, Chris, Brady & Aubrey Rietmann, Debby Caepner Jim Jordan, Liz & Adalie Bellmore, Donna Mohr & myself for volunteering to ring. If you were unable to ring on that day and want to donate your time, call Kathryn, kettle coordinator, at 1-608-617-3237 to sign up.

"WHITE GIFT" OFFERINGS - DEC 16

What is the "white gift offering" you ask?

The tradition of the "White Gift" has its roots in a small church in Ohio in 1904. What began as a humble way to reflect on the love and devotion of the giver and not the value of the gift has grown into today's white gift services in many churches across several denominations.

The story is told that a minister's wife initiated the idea to solve the problem of inequity of gifts given at the Sunday school Christmas party. Instead of focusing on receiving gifts, the focus shifted to bringing gifts to Jesus that could in turn be shared with people around the world who did not have much. All the gifts would come wrapped in plain white paper, so that no one would know which was an expensive gift and which was a more modest one. No one would feel ashamed of their gift and everyone would share in the joy of giving to others.

PPC will share in our annual "White Gift Offering" on Sunday, December 16 as a part of our morning worship service.

"Donations" of non-perishable food items (wrapped in white paper) or monetary gifts (in envelopes) for the Portage Food Pantry will be collected. Thank you for your incredible generosity!

"CLERK'S CORNER"

Every year in October, John Knox Presbytery schedules "Minute Reviews" - meetings at several locations in our Presbytery during which Session Clerks bring their minute books and sometimes roll books for - well, review.

There are very specific expectations for information that Clerks must include in their minutes - a list two pages long in fact. During the review, Clerks exchange minute books and skim through them to make sure the required information is included.

Each church and Clerk has a unique style. For example, some meeting minutes are very short and include only the required information. These minutes are quick and easy to review so I always try to sit near someone with a very thin minute book hoping I get to review that one. On the other hand, our Portage minutes are and have been in the past as complete as can be including a summary of devotions, goals, committee reports and all activities. Our minutes are long. So far nobody has refused to review them but I've heard a groan and seen rapid blinking.

We like long, complete Session minutes. They are the history of our church. Anyone looking back will know just what happened at PPC and why.



Kathy Raimer

"NEW YEAR'S EVE" WORSHIP - 5:30 P.M.

New Year's Eve is a time when we tend to reflect on what has been and to anticipate what will be.

So it will be for us here at PPC. As we gather for our annual "New Year's Eve" "informal" worship service, we will be taking time to reflect on this past year and where we have seen and have experienced God present and at work. And we will be looking ahead in great anticipation at what God will do in our lives, in our church and in our world.

Come and share a special time of worship as we sing, pray, reflect, share the Lord's Supper and rejoice.

Our New Year's Eve "informal" worship, including the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, will begin at 5:30 p.m.



"GREENING OF THE CHURCH" - DEC 2

Everyone is invited to come on Sunday morning, December 2 (the First Sunday in Advent) for a breakfast and to help decorate and prepare the sanctuary and church for the Advent and Christmas seasons.

We will start decorating @ 8:00 a.m. You may stop for breakfast at any time you like.

Then, we will stop our decorating to join together in our time of worship.

If we have decorating to finish, we will do so after the worship service.

Those of any age, skill level or decorating prowess are encouraged to come and share in this time together.

"BRING YOUR OWN ORNAMENT" - DEC 2

Everyone is invited and encouraged to bring "your own ornament" to help decorate the Christmas tree in the sanctuary.

As a part of our "Greening of the Church" worship, we will be invited to come and place our ornaments on the tree.

You may take your ornament off the tree any time after Christmas Eve.

"UN-DECORATING" - SAT, JANUARY 12

To borrow from the Old Testament book Ecclesiastes - "there is a time to decorate, and there is a time to un-decorate."

The time to "un-decorate" will be coming soon!

On <u>Saturday</u>, <u>January 12</u> we will gather to take down and put away the vestiges of Advent and Christmas.

Those of any age, skill level or decorating prowess are encouraged to come and share in this time together.

We will start @ 9:00 a.m. and go until finished.

Come and help out! We'd love to see you!

UPCOMING COMMUNION SCHEDULE

You are encouraged to take time before each Communion to reflect on the meaning of the Lord's Supper for you, for PPC and for the world.

The "Directory for Worship" notes that "in preparing to receive Christ in this Sacrament, the believer is to confess sin and brokenness, to seek reconciliation with God and neighbor, and to trust in Jesus Christ for cleansing and renewal."

As Presbyterians, we believe that coming to the Lord's Table is not a right, but a privilege given to those who come in faith, repentance and love the gifts of God for the people of God.

Sunday, December 2, 2018
@ 10:05 a.m.
"The First Sunday of Advent"

"GLUTEN-FREE" BREAD- COMMUNION

In an effort to make sure that all have access to the Lord's Table, the Board of Deacons decided that all of our communion breads served will be "gluten-free."



"RIVER HAVEN" VOLUNTEERS?

The River Haven Homeless Shelter is presently going through a transitional time.

Executive Director, Cindy, has taken another job as has Ellen, a part time employee.

River Haven is in process of reviewing new candidates for the position of "case manager."

As a part of this transitional time, River Haven is also reaching out to the community to recruit volunteers to help in the work and ministry of the shelter.

Being available 24/7 for those in need necessitates a significant number of people to be a part of the work of the shelter.

This is a perfect opportunity for those who seek to help make a difference in the community by offering your time and presence as a shelter volunteer.

To find out what volunteer opportunities are available or for more information, contact the River Haven Shelter @ 742-7687.

12

Wednesday Worship Service
6:05 p.m. Informal, Interactive Worship

Sunday Worship Service
10:05 a.m. Traditional Worship
Third Sunday of Each Month is Informal Service
Child Care Available
Church Is Handicapped Accessible
Everyone Invited!

VDDKESS SEKVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Org, U.S. Postage Paid Portage WI 53901 Permit No. 158 The Portage Presbyterian Church 120 W Pleasant Street Portage WI 53901